GRANT-AWARDED RESEARCH PROJECTS 2021

Jennifer George (Chair, Grants Committee)

Two grants that were awarded for research work to be carried out in 2020 were deferred to 2021 due to the 2020 Covid lockdowns.

Sparrows

Jamie Dunning, Imperial College, London – £500

Jamie has been studying the Lundy House Sparrows for several years and was awarded funding for the construction of nestboxes and purchase of bird rings. Lundy sparrows have been monitored and ringed on Lundy since 1990. Each year every sparrow nest is located and nestlings are ringed and given a RFID (Radio Frequency IDentification) tag. As Lundy is 11 miles from the mainland few sparrows move off or on to the island and the Lundy population provides a perfect system for monitoring the social lives of sparrows and their behaviour. There are plans to use new technology to collect and save RFID data all year round.

Cetaceans

Dr James Waggitt, Bangor University – £500

Dr Waggitt and his team are exploring the relative influence of tidal currents and weather patterns on cetacean presence around Lundy. Bottlenose Dolphin, Common Dolphin and Harbour Porpoise are regularly sighted around the island in the summer months. Shore-based surveys were carried out at several locations around the island. Observations are being linked to tidal currents and weather pattern data from the Plymouth Marine Laboratory and the Marine Environmental Monitoring Service.

Two grants were awarded in 2021.

Kittiwakes

Amanda Mead, Middlesex University – £452

Amanda was studying sibling conflict in Kittiwake chicks on Lundy in July 2021. Non-invasive observations of nests containing two or more chicks were undertaken in early July. Attempts were made to identify the drivers of physical conflict between the siblings in the nest. Instances of brood reduction through siblicide have been reported in Kittiwake colonies on Lundy. Results from these younger chicks will be compared with existing video footage for older Kittiwake chicks taken during the 2018, 2019 and 2020 breeding seasons.

Isotope Analysis in Lundy Granite

Dr Richard Madgwick, Cardiff University – £500

This research will determine the existence of lead and strontium isotopes in Lundy granite and will begin in January 2022. This is part of a large project looking at the origin of Neolithic human and animal remains at Stonehenge and other archaeological sites. Lundy's distinctive geology means that humans and animals raised on Lundy could have very diagnostic isotope signatures. Unpublished pilot data on some Neolithic animal remains hint at a possible origin on Lundy.

Common Dolphin (photo: Dean Jones).